

## Message Text

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PAGE 01     PRETOR 03345 081422Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----104110 081424Z /44

O R 081345Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8003  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3345

EXDIS

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: RH  
SUBJECT: NKOMO'S POSITION AND US-UK CONSULTATIONS

REF: STATE 157288,

1. DEPT WILL HAVE SEEN USIS-LUSAKA REPORT OF NKOMO PRESS CONFERENCE AND MY REPORT OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING WITH NKOMO. HIS POSITION REFUSING TO PROVIDE CONSULTATIVE GROUP WITH DETAILED PROPOSALS FOR A CONSTITUTION AND TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, INSISTING ON PATRIOTIC FRONT DOMINATION OF THE CARE-TAKER GOVERNMENT, AND DEMANDING A CONFERENCE BETWEEN HIMSELF ON THE ONE SIDE AND SMITH AND THE BRITISH ON THE OTHER, DOES CREATE A NEW SITUATION FOR THE ONGOING CONSULTATIONS. HOWEVER, NONE OF THESE POSITIONS IS ENTIRELY NEW OR ENTIRELY A SURPRISE. I AM INCLINED TO BELIEVE FURTHERMORE THAT THEY WERE CAREFULLY WORKED OUT WITH KAUNDA IN LIBREVILLE AND ON THE TRIP BACK AND HAVE HIS APPROVAL AND SUPPORT.

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PAGE 02     PRETOR 03345 081422Z

2. WHILE I BELIEVE THEY ARE A SEVERE SETBACK, I DO NOT CONSIDER THAT THEY REPRESENT THE FINAL WORD. NOR DO I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD HESITATE IN OUR EFFORT TO OBTAIN FROM SMITH AGREEMENT ON WHAT WE CONSIDER TO BE A MINFESTLY-FAIR CONSTITUTION AND TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. THE PATRIOTIC FRON'S WAR EFFORT WILL CONTINUE AND NEW ELEMENTS WILL CONSTANTLY BE ENTERING THE PICTURE. I DO NOT SEE THE NEW NKOMO HARD-LINE POSITION AS HAVING

A "SNOW-BALLING EFFECT" AS SUGGESTED REFTEL. IF NKOMO SEES EVENTS PASSING HIM BY, HE WILL BE QUICK TO CHANGE HIS POSITION, AND IT IS THAT WHICH WE MUST ATTEMPT TO ENCOURAGE.

3. I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO SEE KAUNDA ON THIS MATTER TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH HIM, BUT I WOULD NOT EXPECT ANY SYMPATHY FROM HIM AT THIS POINT. IN VIEW OF THE APPARENT POSTPONEMENT OF OWENS' PLANS TO VISIT WASHINGTON, I SUGGEST THAT I RETURN TO LUSAKA FROM SALISBURY INSTEAD OF ACCOMPANYING GRAHAM TO LONDON, SEE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ON THAT OCCASION SIMPLY TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THEM, AND MAKE AN EFFORT TO SEE KAUNDA. I COULD THEN GO ON TO LONDON PRIOR TO OWENS' WASHINGTON VISIT.

4. I WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON'S ADVICE CONCERNING THESE THOUGHTS AND PROPOSED TRAVEL PLANS. THEY CAN BE SENT TO PRETORIA AND PASSED ON TO ME BY PHONE IN SALISBURY. (END OF MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR LOW.)

5. EMBASSY PRETORIA COMMENT: AMBASSADOR LOW LEFT FOREGOING MESSAGE DURING JOHANNESBURG TRANSIT LAST EVENING FOR TRANSMITTAL TO DEPT. AT THE TIME HE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED STATE 157434 APPROVING HIS PROPOSAL FOR RETURN TO LUSAKA PRIOR TO PROCEEDING TO LONDON (LUSAKA 1913); THAT APPROVAL WAS PHONED TO HIM LATE LAST NIGHT. AT TIME OF JOHANNESBURG TRANSIT LAST EVENING, LOW AND GRAHAM  
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PAGE 03     PRETOR 03345 081422Z

ANTICIPATED RETURN FROM SALISBURY TO JOHANNESBURG SUNDAY JULY 10, WITH LOW PROCEEDING TO LUSAKA EITHER SUNDAY EVENING OR MONDAY MID-DAY.  
BOWDLER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009